

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) In a network including a router and an optical cross-connect system (OXC), a method for responding to a failure, the method comprising:

detecting the failure in the router;

sending a signal from the router to the OXC, where the signal indicates the failure;

causing a working port of the OXC to directly connect to a protection port of the router in response to detection of the signal; and

transmitting data from the router to the OXC via the protection port.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, where the sending further comprises:

sending an in-band signal to the OXC.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 2, where the sending an in-band signal to the OXC further comprises:

sending a Synchronous Optical Network (SONET) signal to the OXC.

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4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, where the sending further comprises:
 - sending an out-of-band signal to the OXC.
5. (previously presented) The method of claim 4, where the sending an out-of-band signal comprises:
 - addressing the out-of-band signal to an Internet Protocol address associated with the OXC.
6. (currently amended) A method for responding to a failure in a network including a router and an optical cross-connect system (OXC), the method comprising:
 - receiving a signal at the OXC from the router, the signal indicating a failure of a working port in the router; and
 - connecting a protection port of the router directly to a working port of the OXC in response to receiving the signal.
7. (previously presented) The method of claim 6, where the receiving further comprises:
 - receiving an in-band signal at the OXC.
8. (previously presented) The method of claim 7, where the receiving an in-band signal at the OXC comprises:

receiving a Synchronous Optical Network (SONET) signal at the OXC.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 6, where the receiving further comprises:

receiving an out-of-band signal at the OXC.

10. (previously presented) The method of claim 9, where the receiving an out-of-band signal further comprises:

addressing the out-of-band signal to an Internet Protocol address associated with the OXC.

11. (previously presented) An optical cross-connect system comprising:
a spare port for transmitting low priority data from a router; and
a working port for transmitting high priority data from a primary router, where the working port is connected to the router in response to a failure of the primary router.

12. (previously presented) The optical cross-connection system of claim 11, where the working port is connected to the router in response to receiving an in-band signal from the router.

13. (previously presented) The optical cross connection system of claim 12, where the working port is connected to the router in response to receiving a Synchronous Optical Network (SONET) signal from the router.

14. (previously presented) The optical cross-connection system of claim 11, where the working port is connected to the router in response to receiving an out-of-band signal from the router.

15. (currently amended) A communications network for transmitting data, the communication network comprising:

 a router for receiving the data from a terminal, the router comprising:
 a working port for receiving the data from the terminal; and
 a protection port for receiving the data from the terminal in response to a failure of the working port; and
 an optical cross-connect system (OXC) for receiving the data from the router, the optical cross-connect system comprising a working port, where the working port of the OXC is directly connected to the protection port of the router in response to a signal received from the router indicating the failure of the working port of the router.

16. (currently amended) The communications network of claim 15, where the router transmits a signal indicating the failure to the OXC, the signal causing the OXC to connect the protection port directly to the working port of the OXC.

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17. (previously presented) The communications network of claim 16, where the signal is an in-band signal.

18. (previously presented) The communications network of claim 17, where the in-band signal is a Synchronous Optical Network (SONET) signal.

19. (previously presented) The communications network of claim 16, where the signal is an out-of-band signal.

20. (previously presented) The communications network of claim 19, where the out-of-band signal is addressed to an Internet Protocol address associated with the OXC.